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EDITH'S KINDNESS TO THE WEARY CHILD.

MARRIAGE ;

OR,

THE BACHELOR IN SEARCH OF A WIFE.

CHAPTER X.

"The trivial round, the common task,
Should furnish all we ought to ask;
Room to deny ourselves; a road
To bring us daily near to God."

No. 202, 1855.

"You are looking younger and better than ever I saw you, Margaret," said her brother, after the first joyful greetings were over, and Miss Arundel had been duly introduced. "You seem indeed to have renewed your youth."

"I owe a great deal to Cromer air and these

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evening walks," said Margaret; and she began to talk almost rapturously of the beauties of Cromer. But Allan was not an attentive listener; he was thinking of the pursuit of his sister's companion into the draper's shop, and felt glad that Margaret was ignorant how little he needed an introduction to Edith.

It was a pleasant walk that the trio took down the thyme-scented hills; and all too soon, as Allan Grant thought, they arrived at the door of Mrs. Meadows' lodgings.

"You must allow us to see you home, Miss Arundel," said Margaret, recalling the beach scene; "and to-morrow my brother will call on Mr. Arundel, if you please. He was wishing only to-day that he had some one to come in and chat with him."

"To-morrow, I shall be very happy, but not to-night; and I think I should prefer you not accompanying me home. He would see you from the window, and he might be vexed if I were not to ask you in, which would be sure to cause him a bad night."

There was a decision in the young lady's tone which forbade remonstrance; and, accordingly, bidding the brother and sister good evening, the fair vision was soon out of sight; and Allan and Margaret were obliged to content themselves with the comparatively flat companionship of the old ladies within. They so beset Allan with questions about news, that he longed for solitude and quiet; and, earlier than was agreeable to any of the party, he pleaded weariness and betook himself to the hotel, leaving Mrs. Meadows and Miss Katharine in a state of perplexity as to the cause of his silence and abstraction, and his neglect of a very fine crab which had been procured for his especial gratification.

The ocean was in one of its calmest moods; the sunset had left a hush upon its bosom, with his farewell rays; and now the moon had stepped forth in its still, cold solemnity, tracing a pathway of quiet glory far away into the watery desert. Allan Grant suddenly forgot his fatigue as he stood on the cliff, and the temptation was irresistible to stroll a little while on its brink before retiring to rest. He walked slowly on, his only companionship that of his own thoughts, until he arrived at the last house on the cliff, the windows of which were open, although the blinds were drawn, for the night was still and sultry.

A cough—that wearing, hacking, constant attendant on consumption—attracted his attention. It was succeeded by heavy sighs and sounds, expressive of suffering and exhaustion, whilst the sea kept up its ceaseless and musical murmur, which had in it something inexpressibly mournful to Allan, as he reflected that one unseen and a stranger to him was perhaps standing very near the brink of that narrow sea which we must all cross to immortality. "Sing to me, Edith," at length the hollow voice of the invalid said: and the song began, low at first and somewhat tremulous, but gaining strength and fulness as it proceeded. The song was not new nor fashionable; but, sung plaintively by a rich and extremely beautiful female voice, those simple and touching words of Mrs. Hemans, in the "Tyrolean Evening Hymn," ap-

peared to Allan Grant to be of unrivalled sweetness, especially the closing lines—

"There shall no tempests blow,
No scorching noontide heat;
There shall be no more snow,
No weary, wandering feet."

"Sing that once more," said the sick man; and again the tones were heard. Then a pause, succeeded by the beautiful and solemn words of that consoling hymn, which has sounded in many a sick and dying chamber—

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee."

Allan Grant blessed the unseen singer, whose voice appeared to exercise so powerful a charm, not only on the poor sufferer, but on himself likewise. The singer was Edith Arundel. No doubt of it; and he stood almost spell-bound. The shining pathway on the ocean; the calm summer sky, with its few floating clouds, pure and white as angels' wings; all combined to make the ground on which he stood enchanted; and he thought, "Well, of a truth,

"God sent his singers upon earth,
With songs of sadness and of mirth;
That they might touch the hearts of men,
And bring them back to heaven again."

He was, however, soon brought back to earth by a shrill, disagreeable voice calling out—

"Do you wish the fowl warmed or cold for your supper, Mr. Claude?" and then, "Oh! Miss Edith, this is murder, and nothing short of it, sitting with the window open, and the chill night air blowing on your brother." And down came the window with a crash, and Allan Grant from the clouds, as, inwardly abusing Keren-happuch, he retraced his way to the hotel, and dreamed of the Tyrolean Evening Hymn, and of the beautiful singer.

"Allan, did you see any shrimps this morning?" said Mrs. Meadows, at the breakfast table, on the following day.

"Shrimps, my dear grandmother? no."

"And I asked you so particularly last night to look out for the shrimpers: how absent you are, Allan!"

"I am very sorry, grandmother, but I certainly forgot the shrimps, and, moreover, I slept late."

Miss Katharine looked hard at Allan. Could he have joined any billiard or drinking party? He was in a wonderful hurry off on the previous evening. Aunt Katharine was given to entertain these unpleasant surmises; but Allan was too open to allow her to surmise long, and he told the ladies of the musical treat which he had enjoyed on the cliff.

"Yes, that was Edith Arundel," said Margaret; "nothing seems to soothe Mr. Arundel like her voice. He says it has the effect which Napoleon always declared that of Josephine to exercise over him; for Edith's voice is sweet as Josephine's."

"She will sing herself to death," said Miss Katharine; "she quite spoils him, that is my opinion. Invalids, like children, are none the happier for petting."

"I don't think she pets him, Miss Meadows; but she loves him so very dearly, that her tenderness may seem excessive. We will call there at twelve o'clock, Allan; and you might take our grandmother a drive, will you?"

Allan complied; but he felt that he should be

very glad when noon was come; and Margaret, having promised to call on Edith after breakfast, went by herself to the cliff, Allan envying her her woman's rights in this instance, and wishing he could have formed some excuse to accompany her.

There was trouble on the young brow when Margaret entered the little sitting parlour, where Edith was sitting alone. Her brother had passed a restless night, and was not yet down-stairs. Letters lay on the table, and Edith's eyes were tearful as she read them.

"I sometimes think, Miss Grant," she said, "that it is strange why troubles and perplexities never come alone. The post has brought me abundance of food for thought. Here are my troubles; you won't think it tiresome if I talk about them, will you?"

"Certainly not; I like to hear people's troubles. It makes me feel less useless in the world."

"Here is a letter from Ely: it is from my aunt there. She undertook the charge of poor papa during our absence, for his presence seems to fidget and irritate Claude, now that he is ill. I think I told you what a perfect wreck my dear father is. Then one shrinks from bringing him to new places and new people; where he has been known and respected in his better days it is different. Aunt Farre undertook the charge of him most willingly, and now she is weary of it, and says that he will not sleep nor eat; that her girls are coming home from boarding-school, and she wants to take them a pleasure trip. She talks of coming here to Cromer, and wants to induce me to let her bring papa."—There was a pause.

"Would your brother so very much dislike it?"

"Indeed he would; but papa would dislike it worse. Besides, expense is an object; we must then get larger lodgings; and in every way the plan is undesirable. He would be perfectly content if either Care or I returned. The question is, who shall it be? Claude is very dependent on Care for many things; his cooking must be done beautifully, and, I sometimes think, as only she could do it. If she leave, I must only engage a girl to do such work as I cannot actually do, and that must be the plan, for he would do as ill, I fear, without my company as Care's cookery."

"But can you cook?"

"Not so well as Care, certainly; but I have made many things for sick people. Mamma would have thought as soon of omitting to teach us to write, as to let us grow up ignorant of little kitchen arts."

"Do you like it?"

"No, I do not like it in itself; but I like the pleasure it gives. For a long time before my mother died, she never ate any beef-tea or arrow-root but what I made."

"But don't you think you will find your brother less easy to please? I heard him find fault with some beautiful jelly that Care sent up only yesterday."

"Very likely he will find fault with mine; but his finding fault without cause will not worry me, and if I do the best I can, which of course I shall, I don't see why I should be nervous or distressed."

"I still think you had better not send Care home."

"Do you? But then, what will he do for a companion? Poor Care! she does not read without spelling, and with the kindest intentions in the world, I think sometimes she is not the most suitable possible of nurses. But I must fix soon, and I think I will not ask him first."

"Indeed! would he not like to be consulted?"

"I don't think consulting invalids does much good. They are for the time children, and their minds are in no state to judge. I generally tell Claude when a thing is fixed, but seldom put on him the trouble of fixing; and he is, after all, better satisfied, in nine cases out of ten, than when he is consulted. I must call Care and tell her. I don't anticipate she will be very manageable. Old servants never lose the impression that the children of the family are babies."

Care came. She made a thousand difficulties; set very little value on Miss Arundel's cooking, and as little on her nursing; was sure that Mr. Arundel her master had better be removed to Cromer, or else that Miss Edith had better go to him; then she was equally positive that she herself could not make Mr. Claude happy, and that Edith could not make his soups and roast his fowls. It was very well for Miss Edith to talk of getting a girl—she who had never seen a servant girl in her life, and had always had good old servants to wait on her; but girls wanted teaching; and that wasn't so bad, but that Miss Edith really didn't know what she would have to teach. She would find it a hard matter to be rung for just as her milk was on the boil, as Mr. Claude rang every day in his life. Indeed, she so magnified the evils of burnt milk, scorched fowls, over-boiled eggs, and thick jelly, that a less bold spirit than that of Edith's would have sunk; but Edith Arundel, although truly humble-minded, had abundance of self-reliance of the right sort, and she quietly said:—

"All this is very true, dear Care, and I dare say I shall miss you even more than I expect; but when there are two evils, don't you think, instead of making both worse by groaning over them, it is better to choose the least? I think the least would be for you to go and take charge of dear papa and the house at Ely, and I will do what I can here. God does not ever put work into our hands without giving those hands strength to do it. I am not afraid to be left, and I am sure Claude will like the plan best. We will settle it then, Care, that you shall go by the mail to-morrow. I will write and tell them so directly."

Care did not look pleased; but she would have been equally discontented had Miss Arundel made any other arrangement, and Margaret saw the wisdom and value of a decided character.

Whilst she went to assist her brother to dress, Margaret ran to see Miss Harte, a lady whose name was but another name in Cromer for Help. She was a true help: whether it were to sit up with a sick neighbour—rich or poor, it mattered little to Miss Harte, except that in the latter case her step was always the lighter; or to wean a poor woman's baby; or to teach a young servant girl, going to her first place, the practical duties of a servant; or to find servants for those who needed them; or to take in those who were out of

place; or to teach the ignorant or comfort the sorrowful. What would Cromer do without Miss Harte? She was not a busy-body—a quality which we are too apt to attach to single ladies of a certain age; oh no, Miss Harte had too much useful business on hand to have any time for gossip; and it was no less extraordinary than true, that she never seemed to know any evil of either residents or lodgers, but was of that class of charitable beings who “hope all things.”

Miss Harte was therefore the best person to apply to for a young servant; and, accordingly, at the door of her house, which was at no great distance from the cliff, Miss Grant presented herself. One would have thought, from Miss Harte's countenance and manner, that her applicant's business was the only thing she had on hand, and that the strangers were persons whom she had known and loved for years; so thoroughly did she throw her whole soul into the business, and such true interest did she feel in the case. She could not, she said, at once think of a girl she should like to send into a sick house; but she would consider, and they should certainly have one by night.

When Margaret was gone, she put on her bonnet, lined and trimmed with white, (Miss Harte always wore white, and it became her well,) and went from house to house to see the mothers of the girls she had in view, and to learn from them, before taking them from the school, if they would like such a place for their children. For Miss Harte was a wise woman, and she knew that, generally speaking, a situation with a young inexperienced mistress was not the best start in life for a young untaught servant girl. At last she settled the matter to her satisfaction; and a rosy-faced little maid of fifteen years was duly engaged, and instructed to present herself at Mr. Arundel's lodgings at the hour of six o'clock that evening.

Allan Grant made his appearance long before Margaret's return, and Mr. Arundel was only just down-stairs. He looked faint and exhausted, and the change appeared to Allan very marked since their journey from Norwich a month since. He was delighted with the prospect of a drive in the afternoon, however, and yet more so to make Allan's acquaintance.

Margaret came in just as the call was over and Allan was preparing to depart, with the promise of bringing up the pony carriage at three o'clock.

“Will you walk with us this evening?” asked Margaret; but she was sorry the moment the words had escaped her, for Edith quickly answered:—

“Oh no. I have a great deal to settle with Care to-night—lessons to take, and accounts to make up, besides settling in my new little maid.”

Claude interposed: “Absurd! I shall expect Miss Grant, if you please, that you will call on my sister as usual for a walk. Nonsense! Edith; you will be as pale as a lily soon, beside being, as you are, thin as a lath.”

Allan could not but rejoice, and so the matter was settled.

The old ladies were going out to tea that night; and the afternoon having been pleasantly passed by Mr. Arundel in a drive to Felbrigg, he was quite prepared to give his sister up, when at seven

o'clock Allan and Margaret came to remind her of the promised ramble.

Edith was guide, and a pleasanter one Allan thought there could not be. They took the road to Northrepps, that sweet old English village, with its scattered cottages, pear trees, and ivy-covered farms, snug residences, and fine old grey church. Edith was quite at home among them all, and her beautiful face wore an expression of almost childish joy, as she recognised some of the familiar haunts of her early days, many of which she had passed in an old farm-house in the adjoining village of Southrepps.

“I seem almost to know what sort of a child you were,” said Margaret, as Edith stopped before the gate of the quiet village churchyard, and looked longingly, and a little disappointed to find it locked.

“I don't think you can fancy me a child either, Miss Grant; I was so very merry and light-hearted then.”

“And you are not very dull now, I think,” said Allan, “judging by my intercourse with you.”

“Oh no; but gaiety is passed away. I have been to a sobering school since then. Look at those healthy, light-headed children,” she added, anxious to turn the conversation from herself; “do they look as if they ever could be sorrowful?”

“No, but they are not particularly beautiful. I cannot but think that we look in vain in our villages for the rustic beauty described by tale writers and poets. Look at those children, indeed! what heavy, mere animal faces they have. Our town children are infinitely more intelligent and taking.”

“Books are not often true pictures of life, I am afraid. Authors are too apt to draw life according to their own imagination, rather than after nature.”

Allan was afraid Edith Arundel was too matter-of-fact, and yet he could not but be interested in her conversation. It was not sparkling like that of Annie Ashton; there was less poetry—none, indeed, but the poetry of truth; and yet he was conscious that it did him good to hear her talk.

She is very different from the ideal I had drawn, thought Allan, as Edith and his sister stopped to examine a flower. There is nothing striking in her after all; yet is there, he confessed the next moment, nothing discordant; there seems a fitness and a harmony in her whole being. She is like a picture of one of the old masters—a Claude, for instance; so calm, and in such perfect keeping—a picture that one would like to study, and in studying which, would find out daily new beauties and charms.

It was a small matter, but one of which Allan Grant thought long after, that, as they were returning home, and a poor little child sitting by the road-side with a heavy basket, sat fanning herself wearily, and looking very mournful, Edith withdrew her hand from his arm, and going up to her, asked where she lived. The child answered sulkily and bluntly; but she looked sad, and Edith was not disheartened.

“And you are very hot and tired, poor child?”

“Yes; I didn't want to go to the shop. Mother made me.”

"It will be nice for her to see you go back cheerful, though."

"Yes, but I shan't."

"Oh yes, you will. You wouldn't like to have had no cheese, no butter, no bread," she said, looking at the heavily-laden basket.

"No, I don't know as I should."

"Shall I ask that man coming in the cart to take you a little way to rest your legs?"

"He 'ont if you do."

"Oh yes, he will; people always do what they are asked to do nicely." And she called to a rough-looking farmer, who was jogging along at a market trot, and asked him to take charge of the little tired girl; he assented at once; and the child looking pleased and amused too, as she took her seat, called out, "Thankye."

"Is that ride to be given or paid for?" asked Margaret.

"Oh, given, of course. I am sure the man will be quite as pleased to give it, as the child to have it."

"What a number of ways we may make people happy in," said Margaret, "if we only look around us. It is such a pity that we don't look. Now I should have passed that poor child without thinking myself called upon to help her."

"And she looked so cross and uninteresting too," said Allan.

Edith smiled. "There is so little one can do, that it seems a pity ever to overlook the pleasure of doing something, however little."

Walking, like travelling, soon brings people wonderfully together. One may shiver and freeze in the formality of drawing-room intercourse for many an evening, but a journey or a ramble brings out a good many inward feelings, which hide themselves in a party. Allan Grant felt that he began to know something of Miss Arundel, and with the knowledge came a lingering desire to know yet more.

On the cliff they were a little surprised at a greeting from some of the Arundels' acquaintances from Ely—Mrs. and the Misses Johnston, and a married brother and his young wife, who were come to stay for a few weeks at Cromer, for the benefit of an elder sister's health. They were pretty well-dressed, perhaps somewhat over-dressed girls, lady-like, and not displeasing in their manners; and Edith having first learned from Care that her brother was asleep, consented to accompany them on a search for lodgings; the hotel being full, and the invalid Miss Johnston disliking the noise of the sea. The sister-in-law, too, wanted lodgings, it seemed, for she could not share the same house as the others. The lodgings lay at a short distance from the cliff; and as they went along, the Misses Johnston chattered freely to Edith and Allan, who accompanied them. They were disgusted with Cromer. There was not a single attraction to them—neither concerts, nor library worth speaking of, nor fashion of any kind.

Edith's companions took a quiet opportunity of assailing her with questions in a whisper, but a very audible one, as to the name, etc. of the stranger, and brought a blush to her cheek, and a tone of some irritation not usual to her sweet voice, by taxing her with something more than a common acquaintance with him; so that, very glad

indeed was Miss Arundel to leave the party at the door of the lodgings, and to decamp to the cliff-house, where the invalid was anxiously awaiting her return.

"I wish I could help you," said Margaret, as they parted. "I am afraid these Ely friends will be a little tax upon you. Turn them over to me, and I will lionize with them."

"I shall be truly glad to turn them over to any sensible person, Margaret. They are not ill-disposed girls, but grievously in want of judicious friends."

"What a very quiet person Mrs. Alfred Johnston seems! Is she clever and well informed? I could not get a word from her."

"She looks very melancholy," said Allan.

"What sort of a gentleman is Mr. Alfred Johnston?"

"A general favourite, I believe; but he made a mistake in loving his wife's money rather than herself, and she, poor woman, has found it a curse and not a blessing; but I must bid you good evening. I am afraid I have remained too long away, and I have to ask and to learn a great many things of Care."

Allan and his sister walked some way in silence. At length he said: "It is very sad to see the morning of life under such a cloud, Margaret."

"A cloud, do you call it? It is indeed one, then, with a silver lining, Allan."

"That is a very pretty idea; but a cloud is a cloud still. And I confess I am sorry to see one so young, such a perfect martyr. Really, the life with that poor fellow must be a constant rack."

"I wonder, Allan, whether the best wives are those whose early days have been all sunshine, or those who, like Edith Arundel, have passed them under occasional clouds. I do not mean that it is essential to the perfection of woman's character to have been in the furnace of affliction; but I do think that I should never desire to see a young sister of my own so carefully shielded from every rough breath, so nurtured in the lap of prosperity, as our dear ones have been. Sorrow is a condition of life; and depend on it, the trials which Edith is enduring are beautifully forming her mind for the earnest life and holiest duties of woman. I think, whenever I look at her, I can see the seal of divine love on her brow. Depend upon it, Allan, although it may be very pleasant to hear a merry girl chatter, as those young ladies did just now, there is something far more precious in the thoughtful tone of one who has been to that school where the great Master teaches the lesson of life's earnestness by life's trials."

Allan smiled. "You talk very gravely. I hope you are not afraid of those golden locks which fluttered in the breeze just now."

"I have perfect confidence in you, Allan, or I dare not talk so freely to you; but you know how much I expect in your wife; so do not disappoint me."

MASSILLON'S PREACHING.—Louis XIV said one day to Massillon, after hearing him preach at Versailles: "Father, I have heard a great many orators in this chapel; I have been highly pleased with them; but whenever I hear you, I go away displeased with myself, for I see more of my own character." This has been considered the finest encomium ever bestowed upon a preacher.

SOME REMARKABLE BIRDS.

PAPER III.

WE have already, in our account of the leipon, alluded to a bird termed the megapodius, megapode, or Australian jungle-fowl, one of the mound-makers; and we here propose to give a succinct sketch of its habits, which, as respects the formation of hotbeds for artificial incubation, are most extraordinary.

The megapode, termed ooregoorgà by the natives of the Coburg peninsula, is peculiar to northern Australia, and has been found in the district of Port Essington and in Nogo and Haggerton islands. It is partial to the brushwood and dense jungles along the coast, and indeed, according to Mr. Gilbert, it never goes far inland, except along the banks of creeks. It is met with either singly or in pairs, and feeds on the ground, its food consisting of roots, which its powerful claws enable it to scratch up with facility; also of seeds, berries, insects, and small-shelled snails; in addition to these, like the ordinary fowl, it swallows small pebbles, in order to assist in the trituration of the food in its strong muscular gizzard.

The extreme wariness of this bird renders it difficult to capture; for although the rustling of its stiff pinions, when flying away in the dense thicket, may frequently be heard, the bird itself can seldom be seen. The fact is, that its flight is very heavy and very short, so that after rising, it very soon sinks again and is lost in the brushwood. Mr. Gilbert states, that when it is suddenly disturbed, it invariably flies to a tree, and on alighting, stretches out its head and neck in a straight line with its body, and remains for some time in this position, motionless as the branch upon which it is perched. Should it, however, become fairly alarmed, it takes a horizontal but laborious flight for about a hundred yards, with its legs hanging down as if broken, and gains the covert of the jungle. It seldom utters any note or cry; but, from the description of the natives, and their imitation of it, as given to Mr. Gilbert, it resembles the clucking of the domestic fowl, ending in a scream like that of the peacock. This cry Mr. Gilbert never heard himself; at the same time, so accurately do the natives study the habits of animals, and so true are their imitations of their cries, nay, even of their actions, that their statement was perfectly satisfactory; in such a case they had no motive for deception.

The first thing that directed Mr. Gilbert's attention to this bird, previously unknown to science, was the frequent occurrence of great mounds of earth, which the colonists, in answer to his inquiries, told him were the tumuli of the aborigines; but when he appealed to the aborigines themselves, they assured him that they were made by the ooregoorgà, or jungle-fowl, for the purpose of hatching its eggs. This assertion, however, was disbelieved in the settlement at Port Essington, and the great size of the eggs which the natives brought in confirmed the incredulity. Mr. Gilbert, however, well acquainted with the habits of the leipon, and knowing from experience the accuracy of the natives in all that relates to the habits and manners of the animals around them, determined to ascertain the truth. Accordingly, taking with him an intelligent native, he proceeded about the

middle of November to Knocker's bay, a part of Port Essington harbour comparatively little known, and where, he had been informed, these birds were numerous. He landed near a thicket, and had not advanced far from the shore, when he came to a mound of sand and shells, with a slight mixture of black soil, the base resting on a sandy beach a few feet above high-water mark. It was overshadowed by a large spreading hibiscus with yellow blossoms, and was of a conical form, twenty feet in circumference at the base, and about five feet high. On asking the native what it was, he replied, "Ooregoorgà rambal;" that is, jungle-fowl's house. Upon this mound he immediately scrambled, and there, in a hole about two feet deep, found a young bird, only a few days old, reposing on a few dried withered leaves. But he found no eggs, and was assured by the native that it would be useless to look for them, as there were no traces of the old birds having lately been there. This young bird, however, was secured and confined in a large box with a considerable quantity of sand; it was fed upon bruised Indian corn, which it appeared to relish; but it was very wild and intractable. It incessantly employed itself in scratching up the sand into heaps; and, although it was so young and small, not exceeding a quail in size, it worked with extraordinary vigour and rapidity. Its manner was to grasp a quantity of sand in one foot, and to throw it backwards without shifting its standing position on the other leg. During the night it was excessively restless, making strenuous efforts to escape, and effected its purpose on the third day of its captivity.

After this, Mr. Gilbert from time to time received eggs from the natives, but until the subsequent February had no opportunity of seeing them taken from the nest. At that time he again visited Knocker's bay, and had the good fortune to see two taken from a depth of upwards of six feet, in one of the largest mounds he had ever met with. In this instance he found that the burrows had been made in an oblique direction from the centre towards the outer slope of the hillock, so that, although they were six feet from the summit, they were not more than two or three feet from the side.

"These birds," observes Mr. Gilbert, "are said to lay but a single egg in each hole; after the egg is deposited, the earth is immediately thrown down lightly till the hole is filled up; the upper part of the mound is then smoothed and rounded over. It is easily known when a jungle-fowl has been excavating, from the distinct impressions of its feet on the top and sides of the mound, and the earth being so lightly thrown into the hole, that, by means of a slender stick, its direction is readily detected: the ease or difficulty of thrusting the stick down indicating the length of time that has elapsed since the bird's operations."

To reach the eggs is a work of no trifling labour, and often requires great perseverance. "The natives dig them up with their hands alone, and only make sufficient room to admit their bodies, throwing out the earth between their legs. By thus grubbing with their fingers they are enabled to follow the direction of the hole with greater certainty, which will sometimes, at a depth of several feet, turn off abruptly at a right angle, its

direct course being obstructed by a clump of wood or some other impediment. Thus their patience is often put to severe trials. In the present instance, the native dug down six times in succession to a depth of at least six or seven feet, without finding an egg, and at the last attempt came up in such a state of exhaustion that he refused to try again. But my interest was now too much excited to allow me to relinquish the opportunity of verifying the native's statements, and by the offer of an additional reward I induced him to try again. This seventh trial proved successful, and my gratification was complete when the native held up an egg, and after two or three more attempts produced a second; thus proving how cautious Europeans should be of disregarding the narrations of these poor children of nature, because they happen to sound extraordinary, or different from anything with which they were previously acquainted."

Upon another occasion, Mr. Gilbert's native assistant commenced work upon a mound fifteen feet high, and sixty feet in circumference at the base, and, after an hour's excessive labour, obtained an egg from the depth of about five feet. The holes in this instance commenced at the outer part of the summit, and ran obliquely downwards towards the centre, so that, as Mr. Gilbert observes, their direction is not uniform. This mound was quite warm to the hands, and, like most that he had seen, over-canopied by thickly foliaged trees. The sun's rays, therefore, could not reach any part of it.

The following observations were communicated to Mr. Gould by Mr. John McGillivray, relative to the habits of the megapode or jungle-fowl, in Haggerston and Nogo islands.

"The most southern locality known to me for this bird is Haggerston island, (in lat. 12° 3' south), where I observed several of its mounds of very large size, but did not see any of the birds. During the survey of Endeavour straits in H. M. S. "Bramble," I was more fortunate, having succeeded in procuring both male and female, on the island marked Nogo on the chart, where I resided several days for that sole purpose. On this small island, not more than half a mile in length, rising at one extremity into a low, rounded hill, densely covered with jungle, three mounds, one of them apparently deserted before completion, were found. The two others were examined by Mr. Jukes and myself. The most recent, judging from the smoothness of its sides, and the want of vegetable matter, was situated upon the crest of the hill, and measured eight feet in height, or thirteen and a half feet from the base of the slope to the summit, and seventy-seven feet in circumference. In this mound, after several hours' hard digging into a well-packed mass of earth, stones, decaying branches, leaves, and other vegetable matter, and the living roots of trees, we found numerous fragments of eggs, besides one broken egg containing a dead and putrid chick, and another whole one which proved to be added. All were embedded at a depth of six feet from the nearest part of the surface, at which place the heat produced by the fermentation of the mass was considerable. The egg, three and a quarter by two and one-eighth inches, was dirty brown, covered with a kind of epidermis, which easily chipped off, exposing a pure white surface beneath. Another mound, situ-

ated at the foot of the hill close to the beach, was no less than 150 feet in circumference; and, to form this immense accumulation of materials, the ground in the vicinity had been scraped quite dry by the birds, and numerous shallow excavations indicated whence the materials had been derived. Its form was an irregular oval, the flattened summit not being central, as in the first instance, but situated nearer the larger end, which was elevated fourteen feet from the ground, the slope measuring in various directions eighteen, twenty-one and a half, and twenty-four feet.

"At Port Lihou, in a small bay a few miles to the westward, at Cape York, and at Port Essington, I found other mounds, which were comparatively low, and appeared to have been dug into by the natives. The great size of the tumuli, which are probably the work of several generations, on Haggerston and Nogo islands, arises, doubtless, from the circumstance of those places being seldom visited by the aborigines." Whether each mound is resorted to by more than one pair, Mr. McGillivray had not the means of ascertaining.

As a proof of the wariness of this jungle-fowl, he states that, although a party of three persons were scattered about in a small jungle on Nogo island, not a single bird could be seen.

We may add, that other species of megapode inhabit the Philippine islands, New Guinea, etc., but of their express habits little is known, except that they construct hotbeds for the reception of their eggs.

Differing from each other as the mound-making birds do in various details, yet all agree in the following particulars:—first, the size of the egg is extraordinary, in proportion to that of the bird; secondly, the perfect condition as to plumage and strength in which the young leave the shell; thirdly, the great size and power of the legs and feet, which are adapted not only for running and scratching, but for grasping and throwing backwards the materials of which the mound is constructed; fourthly, the limited powers of flight; and fifthly, extreme wariness of disposition. With these observations we conclude our sketch of the present natural group, to which it is not improbable that other species may be hereafter added, irrespective of the Philippine and New Guinea megapodes, of which so little is known.

HASTE! POST HASTE!! FOR THY LIFE!!!

BETWEEN three and four o'clock on the morning of Saturday, January 29, 1546—a dark winter's morning—the earl of Hertford, afterwards the protector Somerset, wrote and despatched a letter to sir William Paget, at that time one of the principal secretaries of state for the realm of England. Henry VIII had then been dead rather more than twenty-four hours; but the event had not been publicly notified, nor was it known to the parliament, which was in session. The letter was dated from the town of Hertford, where the son of the deceased king, Edward VI, was residing, and whither the writer had scamped the day before, to secure the ear of the young sovereign. It con-

tained directions respecting the opening of the late monarch's will, and was endorsed, for the admonition of the messenger, "Haste, Post Haste, Haste with all Diligence, For thy Life, For thy Life."



RACE FOR LIFE.

This was the ordinary superinscription of letters at the period, requiring urgent despatch; and doubtless the carrier, sparing not the flanks of his horse, made good speed to the metropolis, though infor-

at his disposal, through which a more convenient pathway might be opened in time of need. But only along the principal lines of communication could a jaded steed be exchanged for a fresh one, without a delay somewhat trying to the temper of an impatient horseman. Still, notwithstanding these impediments, political and other intelligence was sometimes transmitted at a remarkably rapid rate for the age.

Wolsey, invested with the power and state of a cardinal papal legate, and lord high chancellor, ambled at a dainty pace on a sumptuously attired mule, with a train three-quarters of a mile long, and was nearly a week in passing from London to Dover on one of his grand embassies abroad. But when the occasion demanded speed, and his own interests harmonised with this condition, he was nimble enough in his movements, and travelled with surprising celerity. Prior to his elevation, while a court chaplain, he was intrusted by Henry VII with the conveyance of despatches to the emperor Maximilian, who was in the Low Countries. Wolsey received his letters at Richmond, on a Sunday after dinner. He reached London about four o'clock in the afternoon, and found a barge going down the river to Gravesend, at which place he arrived the same evening with a favourable wind and tide. Procuring post-horses, he rode all night to Dover, and on Monday morning stepped on board the passage-boat for Calais, which was just about to sail. Three hours took him across the Channel,



THE OLD STAGE COACH.

mation is wanting whether the country was frost-bound or miry from thaw. This was a circumstance at that date of no slight importance to the rate of locomotion, for the roads were for the most part simple trackways over the natural soil, which wet weather converted into quagmires in the hollows, or wholly obstructed by floods; and though frost hardened the surface, it was sufficiently rough and difficult to the equestrian passenger. There was indeed no necessity for the traveller to keep to the beaten routes, as a vast extent of open country lay

and having obtained post-horses, he galloped off to Bruges, where the imperial court was in residence, arriving there that night. Maximilian granted him an immediate audience, and despatched him with a favourable answer to his master the next day, Tuesday. Wolsey was at Calais early on Wednesday morning, just as the gates of the town were opened. The passage-boat took him to Dover by ten o'clock, and, having before ordered post-horses to be in readiness, he reached Richmond at night. On presenting him-

self before Henry the next morning, the king saw him with surprise, and expressed displeasure, conceiving that he had not set out on the journey. "Sir," quoth he, "if it may stand with your highness's pleasure, I have already been with the emperor, and have despatched your affairs, I trust, to your grace's content." This was certainly an extraordinary performance for the close of the fifteenth century, and could only have been accomplished by a favourable juncture of circumstances. It won for Wolsey the deanery of Lincoln, and laid the foundation of his fortunes.

Rather more than a century afterwards, queen Elizabeth breathed her last at Richmond, on the morning of Thursday, March 24, 1603, at three o'clock. Sir Robert Carey, who had been lingering about the palace through the night, in expectation of the event, and had made arrangements to have it announced to him by signal from one of the windows, immediately started for Scotland, anxious to obtain favour with James I., by being the first to salute him king of England. Obtaining fresh horses from the post-masters on the road, and riding day and night, he reached Edinburgh late on Saturday, the 26th, bespattered with mud, and in a state of complete exhaustion. The king had gone to bed when he knocked at the gate of the palace, but was called up to an audience with the welcome messenger. Supposing Carey to have been at Holyrood by ten o'clock, he had accomplished the distance of four hundred miles in sixty-seven hours. But the news which he carried in this interval by express across the border, was not conveyed to York, scarcely half-way, by the ordinary channels of communication, till the day following, Sunday the 27th.

About twenty years later, Charles I. was at Dover, anxiously expecting his bride from over the water—Henrietta Maria of France; but she was accidentally delayed, and the king returned to Canterbury. Henrietta landed at seven o'clock in the evening of Sunday, June 23, 1625, and the same evening Charles received intelligence of the event. One Mr. Tyrwhit, a gentleman of the royal household, acted as the express on the occasion, and is said to have performed the distance from Dover to Canterbury in little more than an hour. The next morning the king was at Dover Castle by ten o'clock, which he might readily be, at a sober pace for a lover.

The civil war stimulated locomotion, owing to the importance of speedy communication to the contending parties. Both sides made great efforts. It has been mentioned by almost every historian of the period, that while Charles lay at York, despatches were regularly forwarded to him from Hyde, in London, on a Saturday night, who received his replies in the metropolis on Monday morning. There must be some mistake in this oft-repeated statement, though the distance of two hundred and fifteen miles has been run over by the same horseman in eleven hours. The cavalier gentlemen of the time were dashing riders, and signalized their zeal and loyalty by officiating as couriers, employing their best blood horses in the undertaking.

But the ordinary correspondence of the kingdom

travelled at this time, and long afterwards, at a snail's pace. Letters were conveyed by the common carriers, who traversed the country with trains of pack-horses in single file, or with long wagons for passengers and commodities. By this cumbrous machinery, which was only in motion by day, communications could scarcely be exchanged between York and London in less time than a month. Friends at these places were thus more practically separated than similar parties now



THE RAIL RACE.

are, residing in Liverpool and New York. Towards the middle of the seventeenth century, 1656, the transport of letters was taken out of the hands of private persons, and the General Post Office was established by act of parliament. The turnpike system soon afterwards made its appearance for the improvement of the roads, with stage coaches on the leading routes; but night travelling was long carefully eschewed, as in the darkness the deep ruts and deeper sloughs could not be well avoided, and might arrest or overthrow the unwieldy machines, to the peril of limb and life. For more than a century vehicles of this description were not employed in the service of the Post Office. Letter bags were conveyed by boys on horseback, whose best pace was a jog-trot. Ever and anon they halted to have a gossip with the foot-passengers resting by the wayside or leaning against the mile-stones. Long, too, they discoursed the news on important occasions with mine host or the ostler at the country inns, besides being liable to a summary stoppage from the highwaymen of the day, when letters of commerce and courtship, however

important or tender, were ignominiously thrown into the first ditch, as soon as those containing bank notes had been rifled. At length, in 1784, the first mail coach started from London to Bristol, on the evening of the 2nd of August. At this period letters leaving the capital on Monday night did not reach Worcester, Birmingham, and Norwich till Wednesday morning, Exeter till Thursday morning, and Glasgow till the following Sunday. The four-horse mail-coach, with its officials of the whip and horn, in scarlet and gold, when brought to perfection as a travelling vehicle by level roads and steeds of high mettle, was a thing of life, beauty, and exultation at home, while an object of wonder to all new-comers from abroad. But it never averaged a greater speed than some ten miles an hour, with which commerce was for a while well content, deeming it the maximum of possible progress over the solid ground.

The atmosphere is the scene of more rapid movements than what were known on land to the last generation. Aeronauts have often proceeded at a rate far outstripping that of the fleetest coursers; and though balloons have not yet done duty for the post, the natural tenants of the air have been pressed into its service. The custom of employing birds as letter-carriers goes back to remote antiquity. It arose in the east, where immense tracts of desert territory, difficult for man to traverse, separated in ancient as in modern times the great seats of population; and hence the expedient of having recourse to winged messengers for the transmission of intelligence was suggested. The oriental and classic poets sometimes refer to the dove as the particular bird enlisted; but a variety of the pigeon has become familiarly known as the "carrier-pigeon," from being usually selected for the office. The notes despatched by the bird are commonly fastened beneath the wing, or tied around the neck; and formerly in the east, a paper of peculiar fineness was specially prepared for this service, which received on that account the name of "bird-paper." Messages of affection have thus been interchanged between separated parties; assurances of succour have been conveyed into besieged cities; tidings of invasion or tumult have been transmitted to the proper quarter; diplomatic, commercial, and gambling advices have been quickly sent to a distance; and in fact, the secular concerns of interest to mankind are but few, in which, at one time or other, these aerial expresses have not acted a part. In the twelfth century, a regular system of posting by means of carrier-pigeons was established by the caliph Nouredin Mahmoud, which lasted till Bagdad fell into the hands of the Moguls. A similar organization was adopted by the Turkish government in the early period of its history. In more recent times, mercantile men, speculators in the stocks, and gamblers, have dismissed the bird "post-haste" on their legitimate or ignoble errands.

The instinct which qualifies the carrier-pigeon for this service—that of returning from any distance to the spot to which it has become attached, is manifested in a varying degree by many animals. But how it is led to direct its flight so as unerringly to reach the desired destination, when turned up hundreds of miles away from it, and

without any apparent guide-post in view, is a problem which has not yet received an adequate solution, though man adds training to natural sagacity in preparing the bird for its office.

"Say through the clouds what compass points her flight?
Monarchs have gazed, and nations blessed the sight.
Pile rocks on rocks, bid woods and mountains rise,
Eclipse her native shades, her native skies;
'Tis vain! through ether's pathless wilds she goes,
And lights at last where all her cares repose."

The carriers are not the swiftest of birds. But they are more to be depended upon than any other of the feathered tribes in making their way home, and hence have been preferred as the vehicles of correspondence. The common swift has been known to fly sixty, and the eider-duck ninety miles in an hour. Audubon, the ornithologist, once shot the passenger pigeon of America, and on dissection, found its stomach full of fresh rice, which, to have resisted the digestive process, must have been swallowed *not many hours* preceding its death, but could not have been obtained within eight hundred miles of the place where it was killed. A falcon belonging to Henry IV of France, traversed the distance between Fontainebleau and Malta, not less than 1350 miles, in twenty-four hours. This is at the rate of nearly sixty miles an hour. But as falcons do not fly by night, the bird was probably not more than sixteen or eighteen hours on the wing, its rate being seventy or eighty miles an hour. A swallow was once found to traverse twenty miles in thirteen minutes, a rate of more than ninety miles an hour.

Speed still more extraordinary has been recorded even of the carrier-pigeon. On one occasion, a bird flew from Rouen to Ghent, a distance of about 150 miles, in an hour and a half. At another time, in Ireland, twenty-three miles were accomplished in eleven minutes, or at the rate of 125½ miles an hour. The rapidity varies, of course, according to circumstances. Dense fogs bewilder the bird, and with heavy rains or opposing winds retard its flight, while favourable gales accelerate it. The average speed is perhaps about forty miles an hour; and at this rate, no letters travelled otherwise than beneath its wing, prior to the invention of the locomotive steam-engine. Several pigeons were thrown up at Bourdeaux, at five o'clock on the morning of Saturday, July 30, 1853, all of which reached home at Brussels the same day. The first entered the dove-cote at forty minutes after five in the evening, thus accomplishing a journey of 211 leagues in 12½ hours, at the rate of eighteen leagues, about forty-five miles, an hour. In the year 1845, a novel incident occurred at the terminus of the South-Western Railway, then at Vauxhall. A carrier pigeon was observed in an exhausted state, and readily caught by hand. It died soon afterwards. There was a label appended to one of its legs addressed to the duke of Wellington, which stated that three pigeons had been thrown up at the island of Ichaboe, and bore date July, 1845. The distance in a straight line between the place of its liberation and destination, is upwards of two thousand miles. It was forwarded to Apsley-house, and its receipt duly acknowledged by the prompt field marshal. In the process of stuffing, a gunshot wound was discovered as the cause of death, otherwise the whole journey would have been

accomplished. The bird gave up his mission somewhat ominously near a railway, for our iron roads, with their iron steeds, enable us to dispense with prancing cattle and carrier-pigeons in the conveyance of letters, while intelligence is transmitted by the wires of the electric telegraph inconceivably swifter than ever horse has galloped or fowl has flown.

A FEW PARTING NOTES ON PARIS.

THE term of our holiday has come towards its close, and we are about to turn our back on Paris, and exchange, by no means unwillingly, its varieties, brilliancies, and excitements for the tranquil repose of home. Some stray notes of things not unworthy of remark, which we jotted down in our memorandum book, and which we have not found space to embody in the preceding papers, we shall set down here. First on the list, as claiming especial notice, is the system of *buksheesh*, or gratuities over and above the stipulated or customary price for work done. This system is bad enough in London, notwithstanding the successful attempts which in various quarters have latterly been made to abolish it; but it is nothing at home in comparison with what it is among the Parisians. With them it would appear to be an institution settled as firmly as the barracks or the hospital, and responsible for the support of a round per-centage of the population. If you ride in a cab, the driver, in addition to his fee established by law, will expect a *pour-boire*, at the lowest not less than about seventeen per cent. upon the amount of his fare. In no case can you escape this payment, which custom has rendered an integral part of the price of riding in a cab. If the vehicle you select chance to be a *remise* or a *citadine*, or anything of the superior sort, the *buksheesh* mounts up to double, or about thirty-three per cent. upon the hire. If you enter a *café* or a *restaurant* for refreshment, you must pay, in addition to the amount of your bill, a small sum for the *garçon* who serves you. To this you would probably feel no objection, considering the readiness of the service rendered, and the civility of the servitor, if he were to benefit by it; but this is never the case; all the sums collected by the *garçons* everywhere are put by them into a kind of vase shaped like a lachrymatory and called the "bronc," and are appropriated by the proprietor, of whose profits they form an item considerable enough to pay for the maintenance of a whole family. If you go to a tradesman's shop, and purchase any article you want, and desire it to be sent to your lodgings, the lad who brings it will hold out his hand for *buksheesh*, and will betray most alarming symptoms of astonishment should you think proper to decline giving any. Nay, we have had a tradesman of whom we bought books in the morning, desiring them to be sent home in the course of the day, wait upon us himself in the evening, the books under his arm, and demand the usual gratuity for bringing them! If you go into a bath, for which you may pay from half a franc to five francs, according to the luxury of the accommodations, the attendant who takes your money expects to take also a separate donation on his own account. Again, at the doors of a thou-

sand places, where there is nothing within that could be damaged by your umbrella or walking-stick, these articles are taken from you for the sole purpose of exacting a small sum of money for the temporary care of them. This truly beggarly custom, of which all nations ought to be ashamed, has spread disgracefully in Paris since we first knew it, five-and-twenty years ago; we suspect that the cause is connected with the increase and the poverty of the population, which have too successfully assailed their independence.

Secondly, concerning the Anglo-French in Paris. These are a very odd set of subjects indeed. Generally speaking, they have, without any qualification worth mentioning, taken upon themselves the profession of dragomans to the entire English people, with the view, which is too palpable to escape detection, of plundering the islanders in return for services which they are unable to render. "English spoken here," is an announcement as often seen in shop-windows in Paris as the well-known "Ici on parle Française" in London; but the English spoken, so far at least as we could succeed in discovering it, is the next thing to a myth. In the Palais Royal a spruce lively fellow, to our inquiries made in the Saxon tongue, could only jabber such phrases as "Very sheep," "Very goob." In the Boulevard Italien, at an *estaminet* of a high class, it was in vain we laboured to comprehend the jargon of the perfumed gentleman in white apron who presented himself as the medium of conversation in English. After a mutual bowing of five minutes, feeling that it would then be too bad to open upon him in his own tongue, we backed out, and amused ourselves with copying the following inscription, paraded in immense letters on the huge plate-glass window, and of which the establishment was evidently proud:—

"To English Peoples!

LUNCH

Every Day from 12 to 4 of clock.

ONE FRANC PAR GLASS.

The second drink gives to the customer the right to wines of premier quality—as champagne, etc. etc."

We did not take the trouble to penetrate the mystery by experimenting upon a *glass of lunch*.

It is rather an unfortunate thing at the present crisis that so few of the French middle classes understand the language of the English. Among persons of a higher station, not only our language but our literature is tolerably well known, though with them the mass of this year's visitors to Paris have not come much in contact. At the same time, we fear they have not profited largely by the services of the numerous pretenders who arrogate to themselves an accomplishment they do not possess. The best plan is to have as little to do with them as possible, with a view to the protection of one's pocket from their exactions.

A third note records a drive to the Bois de Boulogne, and a glance at the ramparts of Paris, which, if they could be effectually manned, might protect the city from invasion until the inhabitants were starved into a capitulation. The Bois de Boulogne is the favourite summer retreat of the Parisians, and does far more for them than Epping Forest does for the Londoners. It has its pictur-

esque slopes, rutty roads and winding ways, and here and there in the hollows lies a transparent lake, overshadowed with branching trees, surrounded with rustic seats and swarming with gold and silver fish. Here the song of birds, the ripple of water, and the peal of laughing voices, mingle with the murmur of the trees through all the sunny day. We came upon several groups in succession, each retired in their own chosen nook, and all in the enjoyment of some simple pleasure. One party was entrenched behind a fence of long-necked bottles, dishes, and preserve jars—some lay half asleep on the grass—others were paying court to the viands, while two were singing a duet from the last popular opera. A little further on, a whole family, consisting of three generations, had chosen a flat patch of the overshadowed sward for a grand domestic game of twos and threes. There the curly-headed "six years' darling" chased grand-papa round the circle, and caught him with a triumphant shout, in which the whole circle joined till the woods rung again. Grandmamma sat on a rustic seat the while, beaming with a smile that rubbed out the wrinkles of seventy years, and burst into a healthy laugh when the youth who acted as master of the ceremonies insisted on leading her out to take part in the sport. Another group was composed entirely of little children, frolicking to the music of the sing-song voices of the *bonnes* who had them in charge. Here a solitary student, wrapped up in the perusal of some cherished volume, reclined under a tree; and there another, with elbow on his knee, sat gazing motionless in the clear water of the lake. You might have fancied yourself in some classic Arcadia of the old days, but that instead of nymphs and shepherdesses, there were mere matter-of-fact mortals from the Rue St. Honore, together with a considerable number of blouses from the faubourgs; and that now and then you caught sight of a ranger in the forest livery, whose office it is to preserve peace, order, and good conduct throughout this vast pleasure-garden of the French capital.

Our notes further record some particulars of a wedding, upon which we dropped accidentally in the church of the Madeleine. We had been visiting the flower market, which on every Tuesday and Friday morning is held on the broad asphalted area round the church, and after a delightful stroll among the gorgeous colours and blossoms of the summer garden, had taken refuge in the church, from the scorching rays of the sun. Just as we entered, the bride and bridegroom appeared through a door in the western side, and took their stand before the desk of the officiating priest. Four of the church functionaries held over the heads of the young couple a handsome canopy of cream-coloured silk, trimmed with a snow-white fringe sparkling with gold. The friends of the contracting parties stood around, but did not, as with us, take any part in the ceremony. The priest pronounced the ritual, and then the pair, stepping from beneath the canopy, followed him to the altar at the end of the church, passing on their way a coffin and pall waiting for the performance of the burial service. In a few moments the ceremony was concluded, and the wedding group left the church, where preparations were already making for the service of a vain mass for the dead,

which followed immediately, though we did not stay to witness it.

At Auteuil, which is a charming little town, full of snug inclosed and umbrageous retreats and of quiet sleepy shopkeepers, we stumbled quite as accidentally upon another ceremony. The little church at Auteuil is a model village church, neat and picturesque at a distance, from its old-fashioned spire, venerable without and scrupulously clean and ornamental within. Seeing the door open, we entered, and expected that, according to custom, the *snipe*, or beadle, would come forward to show us the lions, and extract the usual fee. However, he took no notice of us, but, gorgeously dressed out "in full fig," with his three-cornered hat blazing in violet and silver, and his ponderous baton surmounted with a huge head of gold, kept pacing majestically up and down in front of the porch. The mystery was soon explained. Across the little green in front of the sacred edifice came a procession, composed of an entire household with all its domestics and attendants, from the white-haired grandsire, who walked bare-headed in front, to the little kitchen maid and errand-boy in white favours, who brought up the rear. Every individual of the family had come to witness the baptism of their infant, who, wrapped in lace and muslin, was borne in the arms of its nurse in advance of the parents. The magnificent beadle received them at the porch, and marshalled them before the altar in the church, and we left the group standing in solemn expectation of the arrival of the priest, who had peeped out for a moment to see that they were coming, and withdrawn again to indue his ceremonial garments.

One word on the picture-dealing quarter—the Soho and Wardour-street of Paris. This extends along the south side of the quays, fronting the river, and, as is the case in our own metropolis, the old pictures and old books are much associated together. The French dealers and the French connoisseurs, however, have little of that mania which leads an Englishman to purchase a picture because it is old and in shreds, and which folly has given rise to so much roguery in the trade. Their stock consists more of modern copies or imitations of living masters, or of masters recently dead—a material which allows unlimited scope for forgery; and they offer for sale a prodigious number of prints. We cannot commend them on the score of conscientiousness.

The last memorandum in our note-book refers to some small facts on the subject of quitting Paris, which may be of use to others. When, for instance, we came to settle accounts with our landlady, the thrifty dame stuck on an extra franc a day for the rent of the rooms we had occupied, and this in the face of her acknowledged agreement. The only argument she had to oppose to us was, the fact that rents had risen since we became her inmates, and that she would be a loser by us if we did not pay the addition. Though this was no argument at all—for a bargain is a bargain—she urged it with such force and volubility, that we were compelled to submit.

Again, when we reached the railway station, a good half-hour before the train should have started, according to the time-bill, and applied for our ticket, the girl who kept them in her charge was

making her coffee at the fire, and not disposed to be put out of her way to give it us. A porter in livery told us to be in no hurry, and handed us the time-bill, showing that we had yet twenty minutes good. At the same instant another comes capering up, and warns us to run or we shall be too late. Snatching the ticket and throwing down the money, we had to run after the train, which was already in motion, and barely succeeded in scrambling into a carriage at imminent risk while it was going almost a trotting pace. Whether the figures in the time-bill by which we were guided were a misprint, or whether the train actually started twenty minutes before its time, are doubts we cannot resolve—nor can we account for the ignorance of the porter who confirmed us in the error.

On arriving at Boulogne, we had to get the usual passport out of the kingdom of France—a business in which the stranger is not assisted by the authorities, who post up no direction where to apply, but leave him to hunt out the proper office. The sea was calm as a mill-pond on crossing the channel; but the stewards of the vessel demanded a fee from each passenger, which, considering that there were near three hundred of us on board, would have added from three to four pounds to their day's wages!

From Folkestone we ran through the Shakespeare Cliff to Dover, where we slept, and early the next morning visited the Breakwater, which we had occasion to describe two years ago in these columns. The work has advanced but a very few yards since that time—so little, in fact, that we might have supposed they had been standing still ever since, had we not known the contrary; so much do the arts of peace differ in their rate of progress from those of war. It was towards the afternoon of the following day when we began to smell the smoke of London, which we found, although in the middle of summer, buried in a brown cloud of fog and smother, contrasting stiflingly with the delicious atmosphere of Paris.

THE POWER OF MUSIC.

NO. II.—GLUCK AT VERSAILLES.

[ADAPTED FROM THE GERMAN.]

Sometimes amid the loudest uproar is truest loneliness! Very likely some of those bright figures said this softly to themselves, as their glance rested one lovely April afternoon on a grave, thoughtful man, who had taken his seat on a small chair in the blossoming gardens of the park at Versailles. His face was turned away from the moving crowd, and directed upwards; the high clear forehead bore the bright impress of unusual greatness of mind; the sun did not seem to blind the free, blue eyes, and genius played about the noble mouth. The man's dress was simple, almost untidy; and its plain grey colour contrasted strikingly enough with the richly embroidered costumes of the lords of the then French court; for the date was written 1774, and Louis XVI was ruler of France. The numberless pedestrians that swarmed about like bees, flitting here and there, sitting down, chatting, and laughing, soon ceased to notice the

immoveable stranger; the smart violet-sellers, who overwhelmed each individual with entreaties, had grown weary, and passed his impassive figure, favouring him with neither look nor smile.

Gradually the crowd of human beings dwindled away, and it became stiller and yet more still in the garden; the noisy voices of the children had ceased; the rays of the sun grew fainter, and the blue of heaven darker; the birds, intoxicated with the delights of spring, sought their nests; and at last everything around was still. Then that lonely man rose from his seat, and seemed as if he would turn home; but with his gaze directed thoughtfully upward, he missed the path to the gates and was betrayed further and further into the recesses of the park. There it was bewitching and private enough; spring seemed to have hidden itself in those thick paths, bowers, and shrubs; there were blossoms and perfumes everywhere; fountains as they fell told their water legends, and white marble deities looked through the young green.

The wanderer remained standing, and smiled dreamingly; but it was not the splendour of the magic garden that had tempted this radiant smile to his lips; it arose from his inmost spirit. Sweet thoughts seemed to move him; now he raised his hands, now suddenly let them fall; at the same time he walked up and down, humming a melody, at first softly then louder: it was a soft, significant wail. Then his expressive face grew dark; it seemed to cover his broad forehead like a thunderstorm; flashing lightning lit up his eyes, and with a full, far-sounding voice, he sang the following recitative:—

"Go, and seek death at a father's hand!
My foot shall follow thee to the altar;
'Twill maim the arm that threatens thee."

Then clenching his hands, his figure drawn up to its full height, he raised his arms and sang with thrilling passion, with truly sublime wrath:—

"Soon shall he be the prey of my wrath,
'Gainst him shall my sword be drawn;
The altar, unrighteously decked,
By my menacing arm is o'erthrown."

At this moment a couple of Swiss soldiers rushed, like a couple of tigers, out of the thicket, seized the enthusiast by the shoulders, and overwhelmed him with a flood of French and German abuse.

"Rascal!" cried one, in broken German, "you raise your hand against the palace of Louis? You will kill the king with your sword? destroy the church, and break down the altar?"

"And see here," roared the other, "he destroys the flower-beds of the private royal park, treads upon the violets and *les jolies marguerites* too. Away, away to prison!"

The accused for a moment was completely bewildered; he looked at his assailants with an expression of boundless astonishment, and cast a look of surprise at the destruction his foot had caused. At length a smile spread itself over his features. "Well, then," said he, quietly, to his gigantic opponents, whose eyes followed each

movement suspiciously, "take me away whither you will; but first I demand to be taken into the presence of your queen; there I will justify myself."

The soldiers made signs to each other, which said plainly they doubted the sanity of their prisoner; they nodded, however, approvingly, and the little train put itself in motion.

Just as they reached the palace court, a richly gilt carriage dashed up, with spirited horses, their heads decorated with magnificent blue plumes, and drew up at the portal of the palace. The carriage door opened, and ready hands and arms received a light female figure that sprang gracefully from the richly ornamented seat. A small black velvet bonnet, whose waving plumes floated over the most delicate little powdered head, rose-coloured satin and laces, enveloped the graceful form. The radiant vision was Marie Antoinette, queen of France. While her fat companion with difficulty rolled out of the carriage, the quick-eyed queen, as she looked curiously around, remarked the mysterious prisoner whom the Swiss at this moment grasped the tighter.

"What is going on there?" cried she hastily in German, and lingered on the threshold of the portal.

At the sound of this voice, the poor oppressed one raised his head higher, and smiled joyfully; a little scream escaped the rosy lips of the queen.

"Oh, Master Gluck!" exclaimed she, delighted, and stretched out her hand to him; "dear, dear Gluck, who in my kingdom has ventured to fetter free genius?"

Gluck's eyes lighted up; a look from the queen dismissed the astounded Swiss.

"Come, master, follow me," continued the queen cheerfully. "You shall not escape me. I will be your prison attendant now. Tell me quickly what brought you to the door of our palace in such suspicious company; and let us wile away an hour in the apartments of your old scholar."

Thus saying, she flew up the stairs like a young girl, so that Gluck could scarcely follow her. Marie Antoinette went on fairy feet with her mute companion through several glittering and splendid apartments, and opening a tapestried door, they stepped into a simple little room, whose window commanded a charming prospect of the fresh spring garden.

"Princess!" exclaimed Gluck, perceptibly astonished, "this is surely the favourite apartment of our beloved archduchess Marie, in the imperial palace at Vienna. What a delightful surprise!"

"Do you then recognise it?" replied the queen, much moved, and placing an easy chair for the master. "Come and sit down with me," she continued, with much grace and kindness; "we will speak German and talk about our dear Vienna, will we not, Gluck? Now, as long as you are here, I am nothing but the gay, careless, happy princess Marie, the favourite of our imperial mother, and the charming pupil of the great master Gluck."

While speaking thus, she threw aside her red

mantle and bonnet, and seated herself on the cushions of a couch, putting her little feet comfortably upon a red velvet ottoman. She then continued: "Ah, Gluck! how much I have longed to talk with you, without restraint, of past times, ever since I heard of your arrival in Paris; but the tiresome court festivals would not allow me to fulfil this first wish of my heart. I have not seen you since that very formal audience, when you were presented to the king and brought me letters from Vienna. I could scarcely recognise you in your court dress; but I could not help laughing to myself when I saw your stiff reverence, which suited your costume so badly; it was this almost imperceptible movement of the head which set all our courtiers beside themselves, but by such I recognised our Gluck again. But now you please me much better in this simple grey dress; I see again my strict master."

"Most gracious princess," answered the master, bewildered, "those were very pleasant hours that I passed in the princess's private blue-room at the imperial palace, and Marie Antoinette was a very attentive and teachable pupil, eager to learn, and untiring, as few women are."

"Not always, Gluck, not always," interrupted the queen, shaking her head; "do you not remember how angry you were sometimes if I played badly, because I was thinking of some sledging or hunting party? And have you forgotten how often Bach's *fugues* were not to my taste? How well I remember still that you often forced me from the piano with these words: 'Archduchess! such strumming is not to be endured!' And then you took my seat and thundered out the *fugue*, so that I almost lost the senses of seeing and hearing, and I, without knowing it, retreated to the most distant corner with fright. Oh! and then you played more and more splendidly, and I heard melodies such as I had never heard, till the door opened softly, softly, and the empress came in to listen, and by degrees the mute audience filled the room, the ante-room, and the corridors. You took no notice of them all, but soared higher and always higher on the wings of harmony, until at last one of the listeners incautiously knocked something over which made a noise, or the fat asthmatic first lady-in-waiting had a coughing fit; then you suddenly stopped, and rose hastily, with the words, 'That was bravely played, archduchess!' But sometimes you were so strange, that I dare not utter a syllable; then Marie Antoinette might play just as she liked; master Gluck heard nothing, was not angry with any false chord, or dragging *allegro*, or furious *andante*; the eyes of my master gazed fixedly upwards; now he murmured some indistinct words, and anon his fingers played with convulsive haste on the lid of the piano; till, after such strange meditations, he sprang up with a smile of satisfaction, looked about him, and whispered softly, 'Ah! at last, holy melody, thou art mine.' And then you turned to me as if no interruption had taken place, and said, 'Go on, archduchess!'"

Gluck looked benevolently and fatherly at his

former pupil, and his brow grew gay in the light of the lively, bright, and happy expression of her face.

"We have remained the same, your majesty," said he at last, dreamingly; "you, the careless, childlike, gay, gracious princess; I, the capricious, strange, absent Gluck."

Suddenly the queen asked after his new musical composition. "It is called 'Iphigenia,' is it not? Will the work be soon produced?"

"Ah! your majesty," replied the master; "the first rehearsal I held in the royal gardens. Have you forgotten that I ought to give you some account of the company in which I appeared before you? I had just sung, with suitable gestures, the recitative and the first ten bars of the great melody of my 'Achilles,' when the king's brave guards attacked me. The honest Swiss believed that he who raved about a drawn sword, must be threatening the life of their mighty lord; and, in a strange way, confounded Louis XVI with old Agamemnon!"

"Poor, unknown, ill-treated bard!" said the queen, playfully; "how well it was that I was the mighty sovereign of France at that moment, when they would forcibly carry off my dear master!"

Some farther conversation ensued, in which, after Gluck had enumerated the various difficulties that lay between him and the production of the work on which he rested his hopes of fame, Marie Antoinette promised that her influence should be exerted to assist him in bringing before the public his darling musical conception.

The queen fulfilled her promise. It was on the 19th of April, at the midnight hour, that a vast assemblage in Paris burst forth in acclamations as Gluck's new musical composition was performed before them. The listeners had accompanied each bar with increasing shouts of applause; the noble melody caused the enthusiasm to reach its highest pitch; the officers grasped their swords unconsciously: the effect was unparalleled. The audience was carried away by this masterpiece to a degree that mocked all description. Tears flowed, smiles of the greatest rapture beamed, sighs were to be heard, and Gluck's name sounded from a thousand lips. Ah! if music be such a power to agitate the soul, how great the duty of those who possess the gift to consecrate it, and to wed it to purposes that shall elevate and improve the listener.

Marie Antoinette, splendidly attired, leaned forward, participating with streaming eyes in the triumph of her venerated master. Louis XVI stood near her; his otherwise pale face was slightly flushed as he looked with lively sympathy on the excited multitude.

"Ah!" said he, suddenly, and turned himself to the queen; "if the bright joy of this easily moved people, this feverish heat, should change to rage? if the billows of wrath in this mass should mount as high as does now the sea of their rapture? what a horrible, what an insupportable picture!"

Marie Antoinette knew not how to answer a syllable; she looked at the king in astonish-

ment, shuddered involuntarily, and seized her consort's arm.

"Where can Gluck be?" whispered she, unquietly, and scarcely audibly.

At this moment Gluck rose himself from the arms of his admirers, and tried to rescue himself from the eulogies of his conquered enemies. With uncertain steps, and overcome by the excess of his emotion, he followed a waiting attendant to the royal presence. As he entered he bowed to the king; but the glare of the wax-lights blinded his eyes; there was a tumult in his breast, and he gasped for breath. Then the queen approached the sinking man with a graceful smile, and placed a laurel wreath on the bowed head of the eulogised hero of melody.

The master rose suddenly, his eyes gleamed wildly, he passed his slender fingers repeatedly over his forehead, and at the same time cast a look of alarm on the queen. "Ah me!" he exclaimed, "what an awful sight! Great lady! wipe away quickly, quickly, with your white hand that streak of blood which is drawing itself around your snowy neck! Oh! hasten, hasten; with each breath the dreadful purple band increases."

With this cry he fell back swooning.

"The great excitement has made Gluck ill," said the king; "the victory was too splendid and sudden for mind and body."

Marie Antoinette, sobbing and frightened like a child, took off the brilliant and costly ruby necklace, which, lying like a dazzling ring on her snow-white throat, had excited the imagination of Gluck; then recommending the unconscious master to the care of her physician and servants, she hastily took the arm of the king and left the scene of this extraordinary excitement.

Little didst thou suspect, thou bright and shining Orpheus of the new world! that thy prophetic eye, in that moment of high excitement, had pierced the veil of the future. Nineteen years after that evening of triumph, the purple band on the neck of thy unhappy princess became a stream, for Marie Antoinette's head fell, in October, 1793, under the axe of the guillotine.*

THE LOST NOTE.—A ticket was dropped in the street by a Sunday scholar; a lady passing that way in her carriage discovered it, and supposing it to be a treasury note, or small bill, such as were then used for change, ordered her servant to bring it to her. He did so, when lo! instead of its representing a small amount of earthly treasure, she found upon it the following words: "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" The inquiry was deeply impressed upon her mind, and in vain did she attempt to banish it: in vain she sought the circles of folly and dissipation; the thought still pressed upon her mind, "What shall it profit?" nor did she ever find rest till she was brought to the feet of Jesus.

* After the death of the unhappy Marie Antoinette, rumours would not be wanting of presages having been given her of the melancholy doom that awaited her; and of one of these the German writer in our text has skillfully availed himself, to show the power of music in making the soul, when under its influence, pierce apparently even the barriers of clay that imprison it. The anecdote ought probably to be viewed merely as an imaginative illustration, and not as an historical fact.

Value of pure Air in relation to Health.

BED-ROOM VENTILATION.—In one minute forty persons consume at least as much oxygen as would be contained in eighteen gallons of pure atmosphere, while they emit, in the act of breathing, an amount of carbonic acid equal in volume to the oxygen consumed. Now, whether forty persons breathe in a confined atmosphere for one minute, or one person for forty minutes, the effect produced must be the same. One person, then, respiring a confined atmosphere forty minutes, or, if you like, two persons respiring a confined atmosphere twenty minutes, convert, as it were, the vital principle of no less than eighteen gallons of this atmosphere into a deadly poison. Eighteen gallons of air rendered injurious instead of life-giving by two persons in twenty minutes! fifty-four gallons so changed in an hour! eight times fifty-four gallons—*upwards of four hundred and thirty gallons*—of air not only deprived of all creative power, but absolutely poisoned, by two persons during a moderately long night's rest! Need anything more be said to show the importance of bed-room ventilation? Is it necessary to state that the sickening odours, so perceptible at the first, in the morning, in any ill-ventilated sleeping apartment, arise from the fact that a considerable volume of carbonic acid, with the vapour of perspiration and other animal exhalations, are mingled with the atmosphere of the chamber? Science proves that all these products are deadly poisons. Nature expels them from the system, because they poison the system. Yet we insist on enclosing them within four walls. We shut up doors, windows, and even chimney-places, that not a particle may escape. Nay, we surround our beds with close-drawn curtains for the express purpose, it would seem, of *preventing* ventilation—for the express purpose of hugging close the poisonous atmosphere of our own bodies, and so re-absorbing into our systems the very atoms which, by the laws of God, have been cast out because they are detrimental. That we do re-absorb these poisons needs no proof. The same act of breathing which renders them perceptible to the sense of smell causes them to visit every air-cell, to permeate every blood-vessel of the lungs, and come into positive contact with all the countless myriads of streams which are traversing the one hundred and sixty-six square yards of respiratory surface. And so it is that this wonderful surface, which God in his goodness has fashioned so delicately for the purification of the blood, man in his ignorance is constantly converting into a means of poisoning all the system's organs.

Perhaps there is no more startling proof of the utter ignorance that exists concerning the laws of health than is manifested in the construction of our houses. Halls, ante-rooms, dining-rooms, and drawing-rooms, which during a portion of the day are generally left empty—which may at any time be aired by the opening of windows, and which are constantly being ventilated by the opening and shutting of doors, or by draughts towards the chimney—these apartments are always the most spacious and airy; while bed-rooms, which are generally tenanted with closed doors and windows for eight or nine consecutive hours—where, therefore, the vitiation of the air must be very great, and where, in consequence, an ampler space for breathing is an important requisite—these are generally found the most airless rooms of a dwelling-house. Such errors could not possibly exist were not the generality so utterly uninformed as regards that branch of knowledge which should be made the first consideration in every person's education—a knowledge of the laws ordained by God for man's health and happiness.

"HOMES" OF THE POOR.—There is probably not a town in the kingdom but where numerous instances may be found of a single narrow room being the entire home of a whole family; their only shelter, night and day; their kitchen, their scullery, their wash-room, their work-shop, their dormitory, their *all*. For the old, and young, and middle-aged, to be nightly crowded together, without distinction of sex, in one low garret, is too common among our labouring classes to affect their minds with any sense of shame. There is scarcely a country parish but might furnish proofs of this. It is, however, in the dark and narrow places of

over-crowded towns that misery chiefly congregates, and humanity may be contemplated in its fullest degradation. In but *seven towns* belonging to one county—Lancashire—the inhabitants of cellar-dwellings were estimated, in 1848, at upwards of *sixty-seven thousands*. In Manchester alone there were upwards of *eighteen thousands*; and in Liverpool nearly *FORTY THOUSANDS*! Is this a fact to be heard and then forgotten? *FORTY THOUSAND fellow-creatures in one English town with nothing better to which they could apply the name of home than their portion in a damp, foul cellar!* and this but half-a-dozen years ago! And as to the overcrowding in such places, innumerable are the reported instances of cellars, or room-tenements almost, if not quite, equalling cellars in point of foulness, being shared each by *several families*. "It is no unusual circumstance," writes Mr. Rawlinson, "to find three, four, or five families—men, women, and children—huddled in, discriminately together in one apartment, which, even in a most airy locality, would be scarcely sufficient for the healthy existence" of a single family. "No one," he adds, "but persons who have visited such dens can form any idea of their horrible condition. Where there are beds, they touch each other, and generally occupy above three-fourths of the room; the space below them serving as coal-cellar and a *dépot* for every kind of filth. The ordinary rules of cleanliness and decency are set at naught and, to augment the evil, these lodging-houses are generally in the most miserable and ill-ventilated yards, which, in their turn, contain ash-pits, pig-sties, and worse abominations, all "in a most loathsome condition." Remember that these are reported as common occurrences; nor are they the worst that might be cited. Dr. Duncan, speaking of the cellars of several lodging-houses which he inspected, says: "At night their floors—often the bare earth—are covered with straw; and there the lodgers, all who can afford to pay a penny for the accommodation, arrange themselves as best they may, until scarcely a single available inch of space is left unoccupied; and in this way as many as thirty human beings or more are packed together, each inhaling the poison which his neighbour generates, and the whole presented in miniature a picture of the black hole of Calcutta."

IMPURITY OF TOWN AIR PREVENTIBLE.—Some imagine that towns must of necessity be more unhealthy than rural districts, but science is day by day tending to out-root the old idea. The fact is, *Man is at present living contrary to the dictates of reason*. He must cease to live by brutish instinct. He must bear in mind that reason is the gift of God—the gift which should raise him *above* the brutes; and he must use this gift for his own salvation. Then he will see Christianity in a better, broader light, and see the value of working, each for the good of all. When all grow more unanimous in well-doing; when private interests give way to public benefits, and cattle-markets and all occupations causing unwholesome effluvia are removed to thinly-peopled districts; when our towns are cleansed by a perfect system of drains and sewers; when our dead are more Christianly disposed of, and no depositories of filth permitted among a crowded population; when streets are constructed with a surface which, though safe for traffic, shall be impenetrable to moisture, and therefore capable of being "daily washed and dried again as effectively and rapidly as a marble hall;" when, for this and other healthful purposes, a constant supply of pure water "be borne along every thoroughfare and introduced into every dwelling;" when the houses of both rich and poor be erected on sound sanitary principles—in fine, when all the powers of science and industry be applied to the improvement of towns and cities: then, and not till then, will the world be able to know whether the great emporiums of her commerce and manufactures may not rival in point of salubrity, I will not say the rural districts as they *now* exist, but the rural districts as they *may* exist when they likewise, in the course of reason, shall be greatly improved in healthfulness by the drainage of marshes, the recovery of bogs and swamps, and the diminution of all removable nuisances.